



Amended Claims

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1-29 (Cancelled)

30. (Currently amended) A nucleic acid molecule as claimed in claim 54 further comprising a heterologous ~~signal~~ reporter gene operably linked to the inducible promoter region.

31. (Withdrawn)

32. (Currently amended) A vector comprising the nucleic acid molecule of claim 30.

33. (Currently amended) A vector as claimed in claim 32 comprising at least one of the following: luxAB ~~signal~~ reporter genes; sacB gene; antibiotic resistance; RP4/RK2 mobilizing elements.

34. (Currently amended) A vector as claimed in claim 33 comprising lux AB ~~signal~~ reporter genes, sacB gene, kanamycin and thiostrepton resistance genes, an *E. coli* origin of replication, and RP4 mobilizing elements.

35. (Currently amended) A method of transforming a host cell comprising ~~use of a~~ introducing the vector ~~as claimed in of~~ claim 32 into a host cell.

36. (Cancelled)

37. (Previously amended) A method as claimed in claim 35 wherein the host cell is a mycolic acid bacterium of the same strain from which at least one of the inducible promoter and operon proteins were isolated.

38-48 (Cancelled)

49. (Withdrawn)

50. (Previously added) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding an operon protein, which operon protein is the Regulator (REG) protein of the R. corallina ohp operon or a modification thereof.

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51. (Currently amended) A nucleic acid molecule as claimed in claim 50 wherein the nucleotide sequence (SEQ ID No: 1) encodes the an amino acid sequence shown in Fig. 4 (SEQ ID No. 1) from initiator codon nucleotide base 295 to terminator codon nucleotide base 1035.

52. (Previously added) A nucleic acid molecule as claimed in claim 51 wherein the nucleotide sequence is shown in Fig. 4 from initiator codon 295 to codon 1035.

53. (Cancelled)

54. (Currently Amended) A nucleic acid molecule as claimed in claim 50 further comprising an inducible promoter region of the nucleotide sequence SEQ ID No: 1 encoding the *R. corallina* *ohp* operon described having the genes shown in Fig. 3 ~~(SEQ ID No: 1)~~ wherein the Regulator (REG) protein controls transcriptional initiation of said inducible promoter region.

55. (Currently Amended) A nucleic acid molecule as claimed in claim 54 wherein the inducible promoter region is the *ohp* promoter region which lies between genes *orfR* regulatory gene ~~(terminator codon nucleotide base 1035)~~ and *orfT* transport ~~(initiator codon nucleotide base 1450)~~ shown in Fig. 4 (SEQ ID No: 1) ~~or is a modified inducible promoter region which is at least 90% identical to said *ohp* promoter region.~~

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56. (Currently Amended) A vector comprising the nucleic acid molecule of claim 50.

57. (Currently Amended) A vector as claimed in claim 56 comprising one or more of the following: *luxAB* signal reporter genes; *sacB* gene; antibiotic resistance; RP4/RK2 mobilizing elements.

58. (Cancelled)

59. (Previously added) A host transformed with the vector of claim 56.

60. (Previously added) A host transformed with the vector of claim 32.

*F1
cont*

61. (Currently amended) A method of introducing an operon protein into a host cell, which operon protein is the regulator (REG) protein of the *R. corallina ohp* operon ~~or a modification thereof~~, said method comprising the step of transforming said host cell with a vector as claimed in claim 56.
